



More Than 30,000
Environmental Emergencies
Occur Each Year

Are You Ready?

U.S. National Response Team –
Regional Response Teams

NRT-RRT
Leadership. Partnerships. Solutions.



The National Response System

Each year, our environment and communities are threatened by more than 30,000 hazardous chemical releases, oil discharges, and other toxic spills. The National Response System (NRS) ensures that these threats are effectively managed through its network of people, plans, and resources. Coordinated by the National Response Team (NRT), the NRS is federal, state, and local governments working together to protect Americans from threats to our land, air, and water.

The NRS is described in the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan, or NCP, found in 40 C.F.R. part 300.

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Leadership

Key Components of the National Response System

The National Response Team (NRT)

The NRT is made up of 16 federal agencies, each with responsibilities and expertise in various aspects of emergency response to pollution incidents. With nationwide responsibilities for interagency planning, policy, and coordination, the NRT ensures that the most valuable tool in an emergency — readiness — is available for pollution incidents of all sizes and kinds. Prior to an incident, the NRT provides policy guidance and assistance. During an incident, the NRT provides technical advice and access to resources and equipment from its member agencies. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) serves as chair of the NRT, and the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) serves as vice chair. This interagency planning and coordination framework is replicated at the regional, sub-regional, and local levels.

In addition to interagency coordination, the NRT also engages the private sector in prevention, preparedness, and response efforts. The NRT encourages innovation and collaboration to increase the effectiveness and reduce the cost of industry compliance with planning and response regulations. The NRT receives no direct appropriations for its activities.

Regional Response Teams (RRTs)

RRTs ensure that appropriate federal and state assistance will reach an incident scene quickly and efficiently when needed. There are 13 RRTs, one for each of the ten federal regions, plus one for Alaska, one for the Caribbean, and one for Oceania. RRTs include state and federal members and are co-chaired by the USCG and EPA. Each RRT develops a Regional Contingency Plan that describes the policies and procedures for a quick and effective response to pollution incidents. More detailed plans are developed at the sub-regional level by Area Committees and at the local level by Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs). LEPCs are appointed and supervised by their State Emergency Response Commission (SERC). Together, SERCs, LEPCs, and Area Committees ensure effective preparedness among all levels of government and between private sector and public response efforts.

Federal On-Scene Coordinators (FOSCs)

The FOSC coordinates or directs response resources and efforts during a pollution incident. The FOSC oversees area planning, provides access to the expertise of the 16 NRT member agencies, and is a valuable source of support and information to the local response community. The FOSC is pre-designated by EPA for inland areas and by the USCG for coastal areas. There are more than 250 EPA and USCG FOSCs located throughout the U.S.

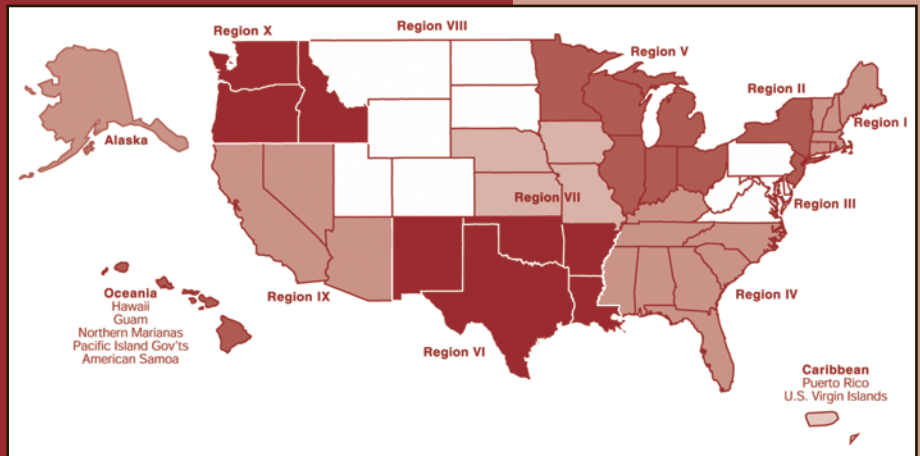
The Department of Defense and the Department of Energy provide FOSCs for hazardous substance pollution incidents at their facilities or under their jurisdiction.



The National Response Center (NRC)

The NRC is the communications core of the NRS. It is staffed 24 hours a day and receives more than 30,000 incident notifications each year. From these notifications, NRC watchstanders generate reports and relay them to the appropriate FOSCs and to the state emergency response centers. Federal law requires the responsible party to report oil spills, gas and hazardous liquid pipeline releases, chemical releases, and radiological releases to the NRC.

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Regional Response Teams

Partnerships

One of the important features of the NRS is that no presidential declaration is necessary to obtain federal support. A single phone call to the FOSC through the NRC allows immediate activation of the NRS.

for response to pollution incidents that occur along the shared borders. The NRT serves as co-chair of the International Joint Advisory Team in Canada and the International Joint Response Team in Mexico, which are the policy and advisory bodies with overall responsibility for the

maintenance, promotion, and coordination of these agreements. The NRT coordinates long-term preparedness and response assistance to the Panama Canal.

Presidentially Declared Disasters

Counter-Terrorism Planning and Response

The NRS functions whenever there is a dangerous release, whether the incident is accidental or intentional. During response to a terrorist incident involving chemical or biological agents, or weapons of mass destruction, the NRT has access to key assets and capabilities of its 16 member agencies to support other federal agencies, states, and local responders to mitigate the danger to public health and the environment from a dangerous release. The NRT, RRTs, and FOSCs actively participate in counter-terrorism preparedness activities to help foster a coordinated federal, state, and local response.



International Involvement

The NRT provides a focal point for coordinating technical assistance teams organized to respond to government-to-government requests for international preparedness and response assistance. Through the NRT, the U.S. has established joint contingency plans and agreements with Mexico and Canada to ensure coordinated and integrated preparedness

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Disaster Declarations

When the President declares a disaster under the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, the Federal Response Plan governs federal agency assistance in dealing with the disaster. When the disaster involves an actual or potential release of hazardous materials, Emergency Support Function (ESF) #10 is activated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. ESF #10 brings the resources provided through the NRS to a federal response. This means that, if a federal emergency or disaster were declared by the President, the NRT, RRTs, and FOSCs would function as described elsewhere in this brochure.



Solutions

Logistical Support, Technical Assistance, Scientific Expertise, and Coordinating Capability

Together, the 16 member agencies of the NRT provide solutions for effective response to a wide range of pollution incidents, both foreign and domestic.

In addition, each agency can provide access to technical assistance, scientific expertise, logistical support, or coordination capabilities associated with its specific responsibilities and expertise. The NRT coordinates planning and can access assets and capabilities of its member agencies to support FOSCs and state and local responders. The following are only a few examples of each NRT agency's capabilities.

Department of Agriculture (USDA)

USDA's Forest Service, Agricultural Research Service, and other agencies have personnel, laboratory, and field capabilities to evaluate, monitor, and

control situations where natural resources, including soil, water, wildlife, and vegetation, have been impacted by hazardous substances and other natural or man-made emergencies. Through the Forest Service, additional response equipment is also available.

Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

NOAA, through the Scientific Support Coordinators, provides scientific information and expertise to mitigate the impacts of oil and hazardous substance releases on natural resources in coastal areas. NOAA's expertise includes environmental chemistry, contaminant transport in air and water, weather forecasts, oceanographic conditions, and marine fisheries and mammals.

Department of Defense (DOD)

DOD provides a wide array of services from its many agencies and offices. In emergency situations, DOD may provide temporary restoration of essential public facilities and services. For response to

contaminant release incidents, DOD's Supervisor of Salvage and Diving, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Teams, and the Chemical Biological Rapid Response Teams have extensive expertise in containment, collection, and mitigation.

Department of Energy (DOE)

DOE's National Nuclear Security Administration is ready to respond to any type of nuclear/radiological accident or incident anywhere in the world, including monitoring, assessment, and working with local, state, and federal agencies and officials to resolve the situation. In the event of an energy crisis or natural disaster, DOE, in coordination with the energy industry, helps identify problems; assesses energy system damage; and assesses energy supply, demand, and requirements to restore the damaged energy systems.

Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

HHS's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences provide worker health and safety training, while the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) has established a surveillance system to evaluate the human health exposures to hazardous substances in emergencies. During an incident, CDC and ATSDR also advise the FOSC on human health threats and the prevention or mitigation of exposure to hazardous substances.

Department of the Interior (DOI)

DOI, through its bureaus and offices and based on its extensive land and resource management responsibilities, provides scientific expertise to FOSCs to help protect sensitive natural, recreational, and cultural areas and resources and to facilitate environmental recovery. Expertise is also available in remote sensing; mapping (including GIS); surface and ground water contamination and contaminant transport; oil, gas, and mineral development; and oil spill response research and development.

Department of Justice (DOJ)

DOJ, in coordination with legal counsel of the federal agencies and departments involved, provides expert advice on legal questions arising during an incident. DOJ also represents the federal government in litigation relating to hazardous substance, oil, chemical, or biological

releases. Through the Federal Bureau of Investigation, DOJ is the lead federal agency for crisis management during a terrorist incident.

Department of Labor (DOL)

DOL's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has the responsibility and authority to ensure that response workers are protected and to determine if response sites are in compliance with safety and health standards. In this role, OSHA provides consultation and enforcement as appropriate and requires adequate training, controls, and personal protective equipment to ensure that responders are properly protected during a response.

Department of State (DOS)

DOS helps coordinate international response efforts when discharges or releases cross international boundaries





or involve foreign flag vessels. DOS also coordinates requests for NRS assistance from foreign governments.

Department of Transportation (DOT)

DOT's Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA) administers national transportation safety programs for hazardous materials and oil by all modes of transportation and pipelines. RSPA provides technical assistance to the planning and response communities, including publication of the DOT Emergency Response Guidebook.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

EPA coordinates preparedness and response for hazardous substance releases and oil discharges in the inland zone. EPA's Environmental Response Team is a group of highly trained scientists, engineers, and responders who provide training and technical skills in multimedia sampling and analysis, hazard assessment, and clean-up techniques.

General Services Administration (GSA)

GSA provides logistical and telecommunications support during an incident.

This support may include providing space, telephones, transportation, supplies, equipment, and procurement-related services.

Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)

NRC regulates civilian nuclear facilities and nuclear materials. NRC is the lead federal agency during radiological events involving licensees and provides expertise during other radiological incidents.

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

DHS is designated by the President to lead the response for nationally significant events. DHS provides leadership to State and local government in preparing for and responding to nationally significant events.

The ***Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)*** is the lead agency for administering financial and technical assistance during a Presidential

Declared Disaster under the Robert T. Stafford Act.. The Emergency Preparedness and Response Directorate of the Department of Homeland Security encompasses FEMA. FEMA is responsible for providing hazardous materials response guidance and for providing hazardous materials training for emergency first responders.

The ***U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)*** reports directly to the Secretary of Department of Homeland Security. USCG provides Federal OSCs for the Coastal Zone and coordinates activities of the government and industry for oil spills and hazardous substance releases. USCG Strike Teams are specially trained and equipped to respond to oil spills and chemical releases. USCG also develops and delivers exercise and training programs for the NRS.

The ***U.S. Customs Service***, a part of the DHS Border and Transportation Security directorate, assists with the safe and swift movement of equipment and personnel during a cross-border incident.

For more information on the NRS, as well as preparedness and response tools, visit our web site at www.nrt.org.



Report Oil and Chemical Spills
to the National Response Center
(800) 424-8802

U.S. National Response Team
Leadership. Partnerships. Solutions.

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